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17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Great Cities School Improvement Prog.

The aims of the McKinley School were to increase achievement in basic skills; to enrich and enlarge the experiential background of the children; to establish a closer liaison between the school, the home, and the community; to discover latent talent; and to develop potential in an attempt to raise each individual's self-image. The teachers' evaluations, based on questionnaires, were the basis of the reports.

Pupil growth in language arts showed a definite advancement in reading levels; techniques of the new trends in mathematics created more variety in practice, a renewed interest in computational processes, and a greater apparent enjoyment of arithmetic. The quality of pupil behavior improved despite conditions such as part-time classes which could produce unrest and tension.

Teacher growth was evidenced in the instruction program; inservice meetings provided stimulating and productive directions in lesson planning and classroom techniques. The variety of after-school clubs, in the Extended Program, gave children a means of expressing themselves in areas of special interests.

In regard to school-community relations, two coordinators were instrumental in developing a rapport between the school and the community.

It was recommended that the inservice program provide practice in speaking and conversation skills. Attempts should be made to provide more challenging arithmetic practices for the brighter children. A student government organization should be initiated to develop and encourage acceptance of responsibility.

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GREAT CITIES SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

PEAK PROGRAM

1963 - 64

WILLIAM McKINLEY SCHOOL

Lawrence & Susquehanna

Philadelphia 22, Pa.

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GREAT CITIES SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

SUMMER WORKSHOP - 1963

PLANNING - EVALUATION

McKINLEY SCHOOL

After the past two years of participation in the Ford Foundation Project of the Great Cities Improvement Program, it is generally agreed by the members of our staff that the results indicate the soundness of the principles and objectives underlying our program.

The progress which we feel we have evidenced in our youngsters has helped to reaffirm our belief in the original premise upon which our program was established. We firmly believe that the culturally disadvantaged child can be and needs to be helped toward the realization of his potentialities. This is possible only through a concentrated effort to provide the essentials of academic and cultural learnings and experiences which he lacks as a result of the nature of his environment.

The aims and objectives which we had established for the program are:

1. To increase achievement in basic skills
2. To enrich and enlarge the experiential background of the children
3. To establish a closer liaison between the school, the home, and the community
4. To discover latent talent and to develop the potential in an attempt to raise each individual's self-image.

In the light of these objectives we have tried to evaluate our progress during the past two years. The following is a summary that

has been compiled from statements submitted by the members of the school staff in answer to a questionnaire. Teachers were asked to consider their observations on the basis of these three categories:

1. What activities have been beneficial?
2. What has not been satisfactorily accomplished?
3. What improvements or innovations can we consider for the coming year?

The following opinions expressed by the teachers have been collated from the evaluation questionnaires.

BENEFICIAL RESULTS

I. Pupil Growth

A. Observations evidenced in academic achievement

1. Language Arts

a. There has been a definitely recognizable advancement in reading book levels

b. Testing through the IRI technique provided a good diagnostic approach to meeting individual needs and grouping by reading ability

c. The cycle reading program has been most effective in making possible homogeneity within reading groups resulting in greater pupil interest and progress

d. Children evidenced an awareness of realistic goals and showed inspiration for advancement to higher book levels

e. Techniques developed from in-service training and practiced in classrooms provided the impetus for pupils' growth in reading

f. Supplementary books made available through distribution from the Language Laboratory encouraged individual reading and experiences in library usage. It also provided a means for developing a discriminating taste for good literature and in enlarging horizons in this area

g. The literature program of story and film provided the children with background and vicarious experiences which encouraged them to enjoy written expression and to accomplish more satisfying results.

h. There was evidence of considerable growth in the skill of creative expression among the children of the enrichment group. Unusually sensitive poetry and stories were created by these children and shared with the other children through the school newspaper - The Echo.

i. The concentration on developing better Language Arts skills resulted in increased interest in the use of the public library for reference in Science and Social Studies. In addition more children sought out the public library to obtain good literature for pleasure reading.

j. The self-study method in spelling and the prepared word lists were valuable in aiding more children to achieve better results in spelling skills.

k. Children showed a development of pride and a desire for improvement in their handwriting skills.

2. <u>Arithmetic</u>

a. The 4-40 club technique provided an impetus toward mastery of number facts by more children.

b. Materials introduced in and provided by the in-service program helped to stimulate interest in drill activities.

c. Techniques of the new trends in mathematics created more variety in practice, a renewed interest in computational processes, and generally a greater apparent enjoyment of arithmetic.

B. Citizenship and Behavior

1. Children displayed a pride in their personal appearance by making more effort to wear clean and appropriate clothing.
2. There has been a decided decrease in inter-racial quarreling and name-calling.
3. More children showed a desire for cooperation in improving classroom behavior.
4. Techniques in classroom management initiated by Teacher Aides gave teachers tangible methods of helping pupils strive for acceptable behavior.
5. In general, the quality of pupil behavior seemed to be more improved despite the conditions which can produce problems of unrest and tensions, such as, part-time classes due to overcrowdedness, new and inexperienced teachers, large turn-over in pupil population, and ever-existing social problems in the community.

C. Cultural Experiences:

1. The music appreciation program in the 5th and 6th grade assembly furthered the development of listening skills. This was evidenced by the knowledgeable responses in recognizing composers and the music associated with them.

2. In creative writing and oral expression it was recognized that the children had acquired stimulating experiences through trips to places of interest.
3. Assembly programs reflected the efforts in the classroom to draw out the latent talents of the children.
4. Children enjoyed sharing the cultural contributions in their heritage through presentation in assembly.
5. Inter-school visitation and exchange of talents developed an appreciation in the children for the accomplishments of their peers.
6. The literature programs conducted by the language laboratory and reading adjustment teachers were effective in providing the children with an understanding and an appreciation of available fine literature. Reactions were noticeable in the classroom through discussions and correlation with Art.

II. Teacher Growth as evidenced in:

A. The Instructional Program

1. The in-service meetings provided helpful,stimulating, and productive direction in lesson planning and classroom techniques resulting in the improvement of instruction in the following ways:
   a. Specific methods for the effective directed reading lesson
   b. The monthly spelling lists and self-study procedures
   c. Valuable suggestions for inspiring creative expression
   d. Ways of making arithmetic meaningful, interesting, and enjoyable
2. Demonstrations by Language Arts and Arithmetic consultants offered valuable assistance to teacher in putting theory

into practice in the classroom.

3. Work initiated by Teacher Aides helped to establish effective routines and sensible standards of classroom management for newly appointed teachers.

B. Attitudes

1. Teachers displayed a willingness to carry out the objectives of the program as evidenced by:

a. Working together cooperatively despite difficult physical conditions within the school.

b. Accepting new ideas and constructive help.

2. Teachers expressed gratitude for the help given them which provided a feeling of security in the work they were doing.

3. Teachers felt that the program helped to reinforce their beliefs in the dedication of the teaching profession.

III. Extended Program

A. This phase of the Ford Foundation program proved to be an excellent means of providing the culturally deprived children with experiential background and provided them with the opportunity to enjoy leisure hours.

1. The variety of after school clubs were effective in giving children a means of expressing themselves in areas of special interests.

2. Bus trips made possible valuable cultural and educational experiences.

3. Outside-the-school excursions provided opportunity for concomitant learnings of acceptable behavior in public.

4. The acquisition of the organ enabled our children to obtain musical satisfaction quickly and easily.

5. The after school club program afforded the teachers the opportunity to utilize their special abilities and talents.

IV. School-Community Relations

A. The two coordinators were instrumental in developing a rapport between the school and the community.

1. Parents were alerted to the necessity for supervising homework preparation and for attention to regular attendance and promptness.
2. Information necessary to the school personnel was more readily obtained.
3. Teachers noticed favorable results in cases referred to the coordinators such as improvement in conduct, attendance and promptness.
4. Coordinators were successful in effecting a change in the attitudes of many parents from antagonism to cooperation.
5. The work of the coordinators effected an enlightenment of home and community problems for the teachers.
6. More parents were encouraged to make personal appearances in school to confer with the teachers, counseling teacher, nurse, doctor and principal.
7. The Puerto Rican coordinator was effective in reducing misconceptions of the new Puerto Rican families with regard to school requirements and time schedules.
8. The homework center for Puerto Rican children proved valuable.
9. The neighborhood meetings conducted by the Puerto Rican coordinator have helped to focus attention of the community to helpful agencies and opportunities for advancement.

CONSTRUCTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Pupil Growth

A. Academic

1. Language Arts

a. The kindergarten teacher expressed the desire to be included in the in-service program in this area.

b. Some teachers felt that the in-service in language arts was repetitious this year. Perhaps some plan for working with new teachers separately would be the answer.

c. Many teachers asked that the in-service program be planned to include work in oral speaking and conversation skills, and more emphasis on the techniques of paragraph writing.

d. There appears to be a need for continued and expanded emphasis on listening and speaking activities with emphasis on phonics in the primary grades.

e. We should aim to provide a more expansive distribution of literature books to classroom for supplementary use - possibly utilizing "Free Library" loans in addition to the language laboratory supply.

f. An earlier book sale schedule is desirable in order for the children to have the books available for use in the classrooms.

g. There is a need for reorganization of the reading cycle classes so that there will be less pupil movement to and from reading groups.

h. Some teachers recommended a re-examination of the spelling lists in an attempt to provide for varying abilities within a grade.

2. Arithmetic

a. There should be a continuation and expansion of the 4 - 40 club technique - attempt to include 3rd grades.

b. Recognition could be given to children achieving scores in the 30s.

c. There needs to be more emphasis placed on techniques of problem solving throughout the grades.

d. We should attempt to provide more challenging arithmetic practices for the brighter children.

B. Citizenship and Behavior

1. It has been recommended that we should initiate a student government organization to develop and encourage self acceptance of responsibilities for behavior.

2. We ought to initiate a campaign directed at inspiring the children to strive for higher values.

3. We need to place emphasis on revitalizing the childrens' understanding of the goals of the Peak Program.

4. We should continue to seek out and present to the children resource people who have achieved success in their fields. It is hoped that these people can influence our children to evaluate their own attitudes and efforts despite their handicaps.

5. We recognize the need for a more effectively controlled plan for supervision of movement of children through the school building.

6. There should be a concerted effort at influencing the desire on the part of the children to practice good manners.

C. Cultural Experiences

1. Teachers feel that they would like to preview the films which are shown during the weekly literature program. If this is not always possible, perhaps a summary of the content of the films can be given to the teachers so that they can conduct follow-up lessons more effectively.

2. More children in the primary grades need to be involved in the extra curricular activities.

3. The primary grade teachers expressed the desire to have their children see programs performed by the upper grade and to be included when guest speakers come to the school.

4. We recognize that the afternoon part-time classes have missed out on the literature enrichment programs. We propose to devise a plan whereby they too can profit by this enjoyable experience.

5. More attention needs to be given to the structure of the assemblies. It was suggested that a committee of teachers plan all the assemblies with the purpose of providing more meaningful programs.

   a. more pupil participation should be encouraged since the assemblies are a natural show-case for work perfected in the classroom.

   b. participation of parents, teachers and outside talent should be considered as part of the assembly programs.

6. It was suggested that a committee look into broader possibilities for trips. Perhaps the Chamber of Commerce could be contacted

for help in arranging tours - i.e. airport - boarding a plane, visiting control towers, and customs offices.

7. Parents should be alerted to cultural events in the city which families can enjoy together.

II. Teacher Growth

A. Instructional

1. In-service material should be organized so that repetition can be avoided for those teachers who have been exposed to it previously.

2. There is a need for more techniques in the listening and speaking areas of the language arts curriculum, and in drill activities in arithmetic.

3. Teachers expressed a desire for more follow-up of in-service instruction by demonstration lessons in the classrooms in the areas of language arts and arithmetic.

4. There should be demonstration lessons in other areas of the curriculum such as art, music, physical education, science and social studies.

5. A clearer definition of grade material and adjusted curriculum is desirable, so that the needs of classes with varying degrees of ability can be met.

B. Attitudes

1. There should be more frequent team meetings involving more of the school personnel, in order to interpret and understand peak program projects and experimental activities.

2. There should be more co-ordination among the teachers of parallel grades with an elected grade chairman, for the purpose of clarifying objectives, sharing knowledge and inspiring enthusiasm.

3. An effort should be made to involve the primary grades teachers in the activities of the peak program more effectively.

III. Extended Program

A. We should aim to reach a larger number of children through more activities in the coming year.

1. More children should be given an opportunity to participate in organ lessons, dance groups, choral and bell clubs.

2. Additional activities should be initiated to include dramatics, rhythm band, supervised play, and art.

3. The inclusion of children from primary grades in the activities is recommended.

B. A concentrated effort needs to be made for extension of homework centers.

IV. School Community Relations

A. The school-community co-ordinators should be invited more frequently to team and faculty meetings for the purpose of keeping them and the teachers in closer contact in order to:-

1. Revitalize parent understanding of and enthusiasm for the objectives and benefits of the peak program.

2. Keep teachers aware of the social problems existing in our community.

B. Through the co-ordinators, there should be a concerted effort to encourage better attendance and more active parent participation in Home and School Association activities.

1. More Spanish speaking guests at meetings.

2. More programs involving children presented at meetings.

3. Providing speakers at meetings who are able to keep the parents informed of trends in education.

C. We should attempt to initiate participating activities for parents in the nature of discussion groups, English speaking classes, home-making, dancing and choral clubs.

D. Parents should be encouraged to participate in trips planned for their educational and cultural benefits.

E. The co-ordinators expressed the desire for additional training in techniques of organizing and involving the community in school affairs.

PROPOSED FORWARD LOOK

On the basis of the foregoing evaluation and recommendations submitted by the teachers, the following plans are proposed for the coming year. We will aim to:

1. Continue and extend the activities which have shown satisfactory results.

2. Improve and extend the practices which show promise but have not been realized as fully as they might have been.

3. To initiate additional activities designed to enhance the success of the aims of our program.

I. Pupil Growth

A. Academic Achievement

1. Language Arts

a. Continue grouping by children's instructional reading levels.

b. Arrange separate reading cycles to reduce class movements to reading groups -

e.g. 3rd and 4th grade cycle - 2nd floor
5th and 6th grade cycle - 3rd floor

c. Use of auxiliary teachers and part-time teachers for smaller reading classes.

d. Concentration on improved techniques of directed reading lesson.

e. Demonstration lessons and follow-up conferences by Language Laboratory teacher.

f. Use of S.R.A. laboratory material in reading group of level VII and above.

g. More extensive use of testing devices for reading comprehension.

h. More provision for use of comprehension skills in other areas requiring reading. (Social Studies, Science, Problem Solving).

i. Practice in outlining and research assignments.

j. More extensive distribution of supplementary reading books in classrooms.

k. Books secured on loan from the "Free Library" for classroom use.

l. More emphasis on development of listening and speaking skills.

m. Provisions in spelling lists for varying abilities in regular classes.

n. Use of dictionaries for word study- meanings, syllabication.

o. Continued emphasis on improvement of handwriting.

p. Extension of creative writing practices.

q. Display of children's writing achievements in school paper - The Echo.

2. Arithmetic

a. Continue the 4 - 40 club.

b. Recognition of children achieving in the range of 30 and above.

c. Demonstration lessons in classrooms by Arithmetic consultant.

d. Experimentation in higher ability groups in the 5th and 6th grades involving elements of "new mathematics".

e. More practice in developing skills of problem solving.

3. Other Curriculum Areas

a. Increased emphasis on use of reference books for Social Studies assignments.

b. Opportunities for securing and organizing research material.

c. Further extension of developing appreciation of art and music.

d. Use of research persons for expansion of experiences.

B. Citizenship and Behavior

1. Initiation and organization of student government.

a. Representatives of children from 3rd grades through 6th.

b. To develop standards of behavior for self-acceptance of responsibilities.

c. Emphasis on manners and courtesy.

d. Respect for personal and public property in school and community.

e. Improvement of behavior in yard and hallways.

2. Emphasis on improvement of appearance

C. Extended Program

1. Addition of activities to include folk dancing, rhythm band, new beginner organ group, library science, dramatics.

2. Establish additional homework centers in and out of school building.

3. Provisions to include children attending afternoon session.

D. Cultural Experiences

1. Extension of opportunities for special cultural and educational trips - preparation of.

2. Greater use of assemblies for sharing children's talents.

3. More inspirational speakers in assemblies - variety of personalities and representative fields of endeavor.

4. Inter-school visitation and sharing of talents and activities.

II. Teacher Growth

A. Instructional Program

1. Provision for in-service help for new teachers in addition to existing services.

2. Demonstration lessons in classrooms and follow-up conferences in all curriculum areas.

3. Use of faculty meetings for presentation of curriculum material and techniques by specialists.

4. Inter-class visitation and observation by new teachers.

5. Study on use of visual aids and equipment.

6. Organization of plan of floor-chairman as leader of activities common to the group.

7. Experiment involving Kindergarten to provide readiness and foundational experiences for the children.

a. Acquisition of necessary material

b. In-service help for teacher

c. Involvement of parents

B. Attitudes

1. Team meetings to include a wider representation of personnel in order to further aims of the Peak Program.

2. More involvement of primary grade teacher in activities.

3. Inclusion of afternoon part-time classes in the assembly literature program.

4. Committee to prepare handbook of information and school policy for better orientation of new teachers.

III. School-Community Relations

A. Involvement of Parents

1. Continued communication with parents providing information about our program.

2. Expanded efforts to encourage parents to take greater interest in school activities.

3. Creation of activity groups for parents (Homemaking, Choral).

4. Encourage parents to accompany classes on cultural trips.

5. Articles submitted by parents in school newspaper.

6. Special programs at Home and School Association to attract greater attendance.

7. Communications to parents on possible places to visit with children for increased experiences.

8. Alert parents through meetings, messages, etc. on how they can help youngsters at home.

Prepared by

Louis S. Forman
Pauline S. Bernheimer

/m